

World Strategy Network

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SPECIAL REPORT

"OPEN SKIES"

by Ray S. Cline

Action

Americans are always searching their "hearts and minds" for ways to reduce the danger of war and promote international stability as President Dwight Eisenhower said he was doing when he presented his startling plan for "Open Skies" mutual inspection of Soviet and American arms at the first Geneva Summit in 1955. Three decades later, the United States is facing a new transitional phase in Soviet-American relations with no real progress on arms control. The "open skies" concept makes even more sense now than it did at the first Summit. President Ronald Reagan is approaching another Summit with Mikhail Gorbachev, the newly established Communist Party chieftain, and the agenda offers little of mutual benefit likely to be agreed on. Perhaps we should take another look at opening up the facts about international hazards, whether they be SS-18 missiles or drifting radiation from Chernobyl.

In the afternoon session at Geneva on July 21, 1955, President Eisenhower proposed that the United States and the Soviet Union exchange military blueprints and charts accurately locating the features and size of every military and industrial installation in each of the world's nations. He offered the U-2 and its cameras to keep this record up to date. He said that day, "I should address myself for a moment principally to the delegates of the Soviet Union, because our two great countries admittedly possess new and terrible weapons in quantities which do give rise in other parts of the world, or reciprocally, to the fears and dangers of

surprise attack."

Nikita Khrushchev, despite Eisenhower's efforts at persuasion, categorically rejected the plea as nothing more than a bald espionage plot to use the U-2 against the USSR, which then and now conceals as much as possible of its military capabilities. The United States, of course, is an open society, and the general features of its military and industrial establishment are an open book.

Since 1955, the American and Soviet military budgets and weapons have steadily expanded without arriving at a sensible scheme to reduce the danger of hugely destructive conflicts. If there is a chance of mutual, counterbalancing reductions of arms, it would, of course, be in the American interest to cut its own expenditures while maintaining an effective deterrent force.

It may be technologically feasible now, on the "Open Skies" model but employing satellites rather than aircraft, to launch a new concept for an international surveillance system capable of contributing not only to the security of all nations, large and small, but also to their economic development. Such a system would help stabilize a pluralist world order in which no nation would have to live in constant dread of its neighbor. The plan, using knowledge and skills in all professions, involves exploiting new technology now mainly in the hands of Moscow and Washington to make military and economic information available internationally in great detail. The United States would, of course, continue its own intelligence collection and evaluation and decide prudently what level of information to release for worldwide reference. Much of the data could also be collected by or made available to a public agency, nationally or internationally at the present time by using the existing satellite orbiter LANDSAT.

One U.S. LANDSAT satellite of the relatively limited imaging type now used orbits the earth in about 90 minutes and records everything recognizable in a swath 115 miles wide on the ground. Every 18 days, it "inspects" the entire planet and all its nations and oceans. In one orbit, the satellite reveals facts of highest policy importance in military, technological, political, economic, and social aspects of government in every nation.

If somewhat improved imaging capabilities derived from the U.S. Government intelligence systems could be used to upgrade the LANDSAT cameras substantially, a quantum jump in international knowledge of Soviet military activities would occur. Nothing would be disclosed about American intelligence capabilities that is not already known to the USSR.

In addition to enhancing national security and awareness of the menace of Soviet military power for the people of all countries, public knowledge of the facts gathered by satellite reconnaissance would mobilize sentiment in favor of an open global information system compatible with the interests of democratic societies.

In the current configuration of superpower relations, this concept of an information age — too early in 1955, perhaps, but clearly at hand today — is a positive modern strategy for improved international cooperation, supplementing fundamentally defensive military policies pursued by the great powers. The Soviet Union may or may not see advantages in participating in such a system, but other nations would certainly feel safer if they could see photographs of the enormous military forces deployed by the Soviet Union and prepare themselves accordingly. The United States would have nothing to lose because its own facilities are all

observed fully by the Soviet Union and, indeed, by many other nations that have already developed or are developing overhead reconnaissnace capabilities.

The nation that provides inspiration and leadership in coming generations will be the one pioneering world systems and institutions capable of using information to assist all nations and all people not only to improve their security, but also to ease their struggle for food, clothing, housing, energy, clean air and water, health, and education. As the Chernobyl incident showed so clearly, technology has shrunken the globe so much that we are all involved willy-nilly in each others' circumstances and difficulties.

An international information system would pool data collected by orbiting satellites and make it available to all nations. Eminently feasible now is a release of photography on such matters as:

Earth resources - It is possible to observe and record (in computers) the worldwide condition of soil, growing rates, rainfall, crop diseases and yields. Infrared detectors can spot blight in crops before the farmer knows it is there. An information center can tell when a nation is headed toward crop failure and when another nation will have an abundance. Similar readings are possible on the size and condition of livestock herds.

Forestry - Along with its crop monitoring, the global information cooperative can keep similar track of the world's dwindling forest areas, its lumber resources, new growing areas, fires, and other dangers.

Wildlife - Satellites can track herds, plot migration patterns and help protect endangered species.

Search and rescue - Satellites able to spot a lifeboat at sea, explorers in the Arctic, or a motorist stranded on the desert can be used in a global safety effort.

Mineral resources - Space age "prospectors" can plot new mineral deposits, water, and other resources via satellite. They also can locate geologic faults unknown even to the governments of the nations concerned and help to head off or at least reduce the impact of natural disasters.

Weather - Even if weather control remains some way off, satellites can provide regular weather data to the 80 percent of the earth that does not now receive such reports. The winds that carry deadly radiation particles around the globe surely should be monitored when imagery detects a nuclear reactor accident like Chernobyl.

Military warning - The kind of "Open Skies" system visualized would spot forward deployment of submarines and aircraft, a fleet of moving trucks, or a military force massing anywhere. The information center would make such knowledge public. U.S. intelligence agencies would still have their own information for national security analysis, but dangerous moves by the Soviet Union and its client states would be recorded by an impartial public

institution before crises reached a climax. This information often would blunt the impact and deter escalation of violence.

The world information cooperative would team not only scientists from a wide variety of fields but specialists in other professions. Schools and colleges would be geared to train people for global information processing. If Americans are in the forefront of this movement, the positive benefits would be far-reaching.

Technical institutes would train their students to exploit technology for human uses and the development of earth resources. Military academies would educate leaders to serve all-nation defense forces committed to war prevention and peacekeeping. Law and business schools would train managers for global organizations and groom students to work with their counterparts in other nations toward better human understanding.

This vision of what could happen has been developing and attracting more and more international attention in the decades since Eisenhower's trial balloon aborted in 1956. Two fervent advocates were a relatively unknown husband and wife team, Howard and Harriet Kurtz, who wrote about their plans and hopes along these lines under the corporate title of War Control Planners, Inc. He was a retired U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, she an ordained clergywoman. They saw the scheme as more practical and attractive than purely idealistic plans for beating swords into plowshares. They based their argument on these three prime assumptions:

o That no nation need to give up its own defense forces to join the global information system. Ideally, the plan would reduce the need for forces but,

meanwhile, nations could retain their arms or pursue arms control as they are doing now.

- o That the plan does not depend on lengthy international negotiations and complicated agreements before it can get started. Any one nation, preferably the United States, can take the lead simply by making some of its advanced technology and its satellites available to the world.
- o That the scheme offers a practical answer to the economic problems of converting from war to peace and of reducing the production of arms. The information cooperative would be so massive and would draw in the talents of so many fields that it would take up both the slack in employment and the loss of revenue for arms manufactures. Control procedures could be devised to guarantee against manipulation by any single nation.

The military, of course, would be only a piece of the big picture, but an important piece. Military hardware and knowhow are major ingredients of the cooperative, and the cooperative is the possible solution to a prime problem the services face at the moment — the need for a mission the public will support and the Congress will fund without the carping that accompanies the current effort to modernize and update the forces.

Finally, the image of the U.S. intelligence community would change. The people of all nations would have to look up to American intelligence capabilities with hope and gratitude. The American people will be increasingly proud to

support their global intelligence and information gathering services, leading all nations toward global service institutions of a civilized international order.

The great American national assets -- the global/defense/space/communications/command control systems -- will be re-employed in a grand and noble national commitment to pioneer the world-sized systems to guard the security and progress of all nations.

The Kurtz plan gradually attracted supporters over the years. Harriet died in 1977 but Howard continued to advocate their dream. In part due to their efforts, in 1978 the General Assembly of the United Nations created a committee of experts from twelve countries (excluding the United States and the Soviet Union) under the chairmanship of an official of the French space agency, C.N.E.S., to conduct a feasibility study.

After four years, a 123-page analysis of the technical, legal, and financial aspects of a global satellite monitoring agency was completed. While no action has been taken to implement the report (UN Document E.83.1X.3), the concept becomes more attractive all the time as it becomes better known and more compellingly relevant to the global information challenge.

These unprecedented world-size capabilities for spreading information and reducing international dangers are within ready reach of the Congress and the President without undercutting our intelligence, defense, or other national security efforts. Whether unilaterally or internationally pursued, a new and more ambitious "Open Skies" proposal would be an excellent initiative for President Reagan at the next Summit. Maybe the time of this idea has finally come.

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Dr. Cline was a Henry Prize Fellow at Balliol College, Oxford University, and a member of the Society of Fellows at Harvard University, where he earned B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees.

Early in World War II, Dr. Cline began a career in intelligence with the U.S. Navy and the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and subsequently served with the U.S. Government for 31 years. During that time, he was posted abroad, both in Europe and Asia, for more than ten years. As Deputy Director for intelligence for the Central Intelligence Agency (1962-1966), he played a major role in the Cuba missile crisis of 1962.

From 1969 until retirement in 1973, he was Director of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research at the Department of State. He was awarded CIA's Distinguished Intelligence Medal and the Career Intelligence Medal.

Dr. Cline is the author of Washington Command Poet (Department of Army, 1951), a reference work on military planning in World War II, and Secrets. Spics. and Scholars (Acropolis Books, 1976), which described the American intelligence system from World War II through 1976. The latter book has been updated several times. The latest edition is Secrets. Spics, and Scholars: The CLA from Receivelt to Reagam (Foreign Intelligence Press, 1986).

In addition, Dr. Cline has written a series of studies on world geopolitics and the relative strengths of nations. The first was World Power Assessment (The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, 1975). Revised versions were published by Westview Press, the most recent in 1980 under the title World Power Trends and U.S. Foreign Policy for

the 1980s. He summarized the geopolitical concepts of this series in a managraph, U.S. Power in a World of Conflict (The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, 1980).

He has co-authored books on economic output and on terrorism. The first, with Dr. Herbert Block, is The Planetary Product in 1962 (The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown: University, 1983). The second and third, with Dr Yonah Alexander, are Terorism: The Soviet Commection (Crane Russak, 1984) and Terrorism as State-Sponsored Covert Warfare (Hero Books, 1986).

Among his many articles are "Policy Without Inteiligence," Foreign Policy, No. 17, Winter 1974-74; "A Grand New Strategy for the United States," Comparative Strategy, Vol. 1, Nos. 1 & 2, 1978; "Needed: An 'All-Oceans Alliance,' " Sea Power, Vol. 23, No. 4, April 1980; and "Terrorism: Seedbed for Soviet Influence," Midstream, Vol. XXVI, No. 5, May 1980. He contributed a chapter. "The U.S. Intelligence Machine," for The U.S. Walk Machine (Crown Publishers, 1978) and wrote the introduction for The Intelligence War (Salamander, 1988). He also wrote a chapter, "The Future of U.S. Foreign Intelligence Operations," for The United States in the 1980s and the leading chapter, "U.S. Foreign Policy for Asia," for An American Foreign Policy for Asia—the 1980s and Beyond (both volumes published by Hoover Institution, Stanford University).

With his wife, Marjorie Wilson Cline, he coauthored: "The Communist Five and the Capitalist Ten: Socio-Economic Systems in Asia." Journal of East Asiam Affairs, Korea, Spring/Summer 1982 and "Island Fortress of Freedom." The American Legion Magasine, August 1983. The latter describes the Republic of China on Taiwan.

Dr. Cline is Vice President of the Veterans of the Office of Strategic Services, the World War II precursor of the CIA, and is founder and President of the National Intelligence Study Center, created to improve understanding of the role of intelligence in the American political process. He is a member of the Board of Visitors of the United States Defense Intelligence College. He is also President of The Committee for a Free China.